



R E M A R K S

U P O N T H E

F I R S T o f T H R E E

L E T T E R S

A G A I N S T T H E

C O N F E S S I O N A L.



(Price One Shilling and Six-pence.)

R. H. M. A. R. K. S.

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2405.6
R E M A R K S

UPON THE

F I R S T of T H R E E
L E T T E R S

AGAINST THE

C O N F E S S I O N A L :

By a Country CLERGYMAN.

The Rev. Mr. Quaker

He did but prompt the age to quit their clogs,
By the known rules of antient liberty,
When strait a barbarous noise environs *Him*
Of Owls and Cuckoos, Asses, Apes and Dogs.

MILTON.

μέλειν τῆς ἀληθείας μάλλον ἢ τῆς δόξης.

ARIST.

L O N D O N :

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M DCC LXVIII.

R E M A R K S

FROM THE

FIRST OF THE YEAR

LETTER

ACROSS THE

CONFESSIO

BY A COMPTON GILMAN



48
8
973

R E M A R K S
U P O N A
L E T T E R, &c.

MODERATION is one of those virtues, that are more generally talked of, than understood. In writings of a controversial nature, the fashion of the times in which we live obliges Authors to make great professions of moderation and candour.

B

But

But we are not to form our judgment concerning a man's moderation merely from his own declarations ; but if we intend our conclusion to be free from error, it will be proper to take into our estimate the design and spirit with which a work appears to be written. It will also be proper to consider the nature of the performance itself. And if we find the Author's professed intention is to correct vice and immorality, to defend the just rights and liberties of mankind, we ought not to be surprized, if vicious and immoral men in the one case, and in the other, the advocates and friends of lawless tyranny and oppression are drawn in their proper colours, and consigned to public infamy. And such an Author

is

is so far from deserving to be charged with want of candour, that he merits our best thanks for the services he does to his fellow creatures. For it can be ascribed to nothing but the want of writers, possessed of abilities joined to a proper share of courage, to point out to the public their true interest as occasion requires, that we behold the natural rights of mankind so often violated, and the many rendered subservient to the base designs of the few. But in matters, merely speculative, it is possible for persons of the most distinguished abilities to fall into many mistakes. Nor can the greatest degree of honesty secure us from error. We ought therefore to treat men with candour, be their opinions ever so

absurd, or ridiculous. This is the proper field wherein we should learn to exercise our moderation. But still we are ever to remember that our claim to liberty, is no longer just than while we allow the same liberty to others : But when a person begins to make his opinions the rule of faith to other men, or from the prospect of some paltry worldly advantage, becomes the mercenary defender of the cause of slavery, be it civil, or religious, to treat such an one with a just degree of severity, and to lay open his base and pernicious intentions, is one of the best services, that we can render to the public.

I was

I was naturally lead into these reflections upon considering the present state of the controversy, between the Author of the Confessional, and his opponents.

There are few of our readers, who are unacquainted with the general tendency of that celebrated performance. Neither are the many artifices that are daily practiced, in order to draw the attention of the public from the principal object of their concern altogether unknown.

The design of the Author of the Confessional seems to be the setting on foot an enquiry into the right of Protestant Churches to impose articles

or

or confessions of faith, that are not manifestly agreeable to the gospel, upon those persons that offer themselves as candidates for the ministry. Or in other words, whether such a practice can be defended upon the principles of the reformation. I do not mean, whether any or all of the reformers did or did not vindicate this practice; for were we to be determined by this rule, we should fall into many absurdities: For it is well known that among other things they both defended and practiced the burning of Hereticks. But we are to consider whether their separation from the church of Rome be founded, and whether it can be justified upon any other principle than the right of private

vate judgment : And whether the very same argumentation that will justify a Protestant in the imposition of the thirty-nine articles of the church of England, be not such, as will vindicate the church of Rome in requiring subscription to all and singular, the articles of the council of Trent.

This is the true state of the Question, that is or ought to be debated between the Author of the Confessional and his adversaries. But instead of suffering this subject to be argued in a calm and decent manner, as a matter of such vast importance seems to demand, every method, that art can invent, or malice suggest, is employed to lay the controversy asleep,
or

or to fix the public attention upon things of no kind of importance. All sincere believers of the truth of the gospel, are concerned in the event of this dispute : For it is a matter of the highest importance, whether mankind are to be instructed from the pure fountains of Christianity, or obliged to drink of the muddy cisterns of human authority. But whether the Author of the Confessional be a clergyman or a layman, whether he be guilty of prevarication, whether he has made some mistakes in the historical parts of that work, are questions of as much consequence, as it would be to dispute whether he be a tall or a short man, or whether he ride upon a grey horse or a black one.

But

But trifling as these enquiries may appear, they are made the subject of the greatest part of an hundred pages, which are comprized in a pamphlet entitled, *A LETTER to the Authour of the CONFSSIONAL*. The writer of this letter assumes an appearance of great solemnity, and with all the majesty of an Inquisitor General, calls him to a severe account for want of moderation and candour, for prevarication, for a misrepresentation of facts, and in short many other high crimes and misdemeanours. At the same time the Letter-writer would lay claim to a large share of candour, and if you were to judge of him merely from his own professions, you would imagine him to be one of the most

C

charitable,

charitable, catholic writers that ever appeared in the world. But the misfortune is, whenever you compare his professions with the judgment he passes upon the arguments of his antagonist, you cannot help thinking of the conduct of the Inquisition, She, whenever a poor creature is found guilty of heresy, that is, of making use of his own private judgment in opposition to that of the Church, at the same time she delivers the convict to the secular arm to be roasted alive, never fails making the strongest professions of her clemency and moderation. Much in the same light I consider the moderation of a man, who can submit to wound the reputation of another merely for his

his endeavouring to defend the cause of christian liberty, and to support, in opposition to popish tyranny, the genuine principles of protestantism. But, base and mean as the Letter-writer's endeavours are, this Authour's reputation is fixed upon a foundation too firm to be shaken by any attacks of this nature : As long as a regard for liberty, for truth, and pure religion shall have any place upon earth, so long shall the *Confessional* be ranked among those valuable performances, that do honour to the religion of Jesus, and are calculated to exhibit it to the public view in its native simplicity, full of grace and truth.

But my intention is not to write a panygerick upon that excellent work ; altho' what has been said of the famous *Lettres provinciales*, may with equal propriety be applied to the *Confessional*, *seront eternellement regardées comme un modèle de goût et de style.** Neither do I propose to enter into a debate with the Letter-writer concerning the Authour of the *Confessional's* fidelity as an historian ; for this would be a task, for which I have neither leisure nor inclination. And I make no doubt of its being executed by some person far better qualified for such an undertaking. I shall, therefore, content my-

* See a Book entitled, *Sur la destruction des Jesuits*, and supposed to be written by M. D' Alembert, page 82.

self with considering and pointing out some part of the false reasoning into which this writer has frequently fallen, during the course of his examination of the preface to the *Confessional*. But the reader will remember, that I have not engaged in this controversy from any personal attachment to the reputed Authour of that celebrated performance, whom I have never seen, and from whom I have never received a single letter ; but merely from a desire of supporting the cause of truth and the interest of the Protestant religion.

The Letter-writer begins his epistle, after a previous declaration of his candour towards his antagonist, with
 laying

laying before the public the several declarations and subscriptions, to which all clergymen are obliged to submit at the time of their entering into holy orders. And then he adds, " I presume, " you will not say, that your book is " consistent with these declarations." And taking this matter for granted (tho' surely some proof ought to have been brought in support of it) he proceeds in making a set of charitable suppositions in favour of the Authour of the *Confessional*. But for fear they should have too great weight, some are added of a qualifying nature, which seem to intimate, that since that writer has thought fit to depart from the terms upon which he was admitted a minister of our Church, he

ought

ought not to officiate in that capacity any longer. This has often been the language of bigotry, and it is so hackneyed as to be scarce worthy of an answer. But perhaps the Letter-writer did not consider, that the propriety of imposing articles in general, and the truth of any particular set of articles are questions widely different from each other. So distinct are they as not to have the least connection. Nor does he seem to be sensible, that the agreement of any form of public worship with scripture, and the expediency of that form are questions as different.

I will not take upon myself to affirm, that there is nothing in the
Confessional,

Confessional, contrary to the articles of the Church of *England*. But surely this charge should have received some other support than a bare assertion. All that I intend in this matter is to shew that, be our articles and public forms ever so agreeable to scripture, yet there may be sufficient reasons to propose the abolition of the one, and the amendment of the other. And surely there is nothing in any of our subscriptions and declarations to prevent us from making any proposal of this kind. If there be, I do not see in what better condition we are, than if we were members of the Church of *Rome* ; for in this case error may be entailed upon us for ever without remedy and without relief.

But

But with respect to subscription in general, the friends of liberty urge, that it is an imposition upon the common rights of Christians, and contrary to the first principles of the reformation : And, till this proposition be proved to be false (which the Letter-writer has not attempted to do in his first epistle) I shall take the liberty of asserting that, be the articles imposed ever so true, yet there is reason sufficient for abolishing them.

The offices of a Church may be also very consistent with scripture, and yet many cogent reasons may conspire to evince the expediency of an alteration of them.

D

The

The end of all public worship is the purification of the human affections, and the drawing of the mind from earthly, to the contemplation of heavenly, objects. If a public Liturgy do not answer these ends, be it ever so agreeable to scripture, it becomes useless. But it cannot answer the end which it is designed to effect, if, instead of plainness and simplicity, it be full of obscurity. For it is impossible to pray with the spirit, that is, with devotion, unless we pray with understanding also. A form of worship full of dark metaphysical subtilities seems by no means calculated to inspire men with the divine and amiable spirit of the Gospel.

A liturgy

A Liturgy may also be very consistent with scripture, and at the same time want to be reformed; I mean, if the language of it be growing barbarous and obsolete. This must in a short time be the case of all Liturgies, that are composed at a period, when the language of the country wherein they are used, is just beginning to be polished and refined. And, unless they in some measure partake of the same improvement, it does not require the gift of prophecy to discern, that they must become the objects of contempt and ridicule, instead of regard and reverence. And as all language is in a fluctuating condition, unless it be prevented by a series of miracles,

that was not vouchsafed to the scriptures themselves, it may at length, like that of the Church of *Rome*, become totally unintelligible to all but the sacred order. The learned *Prideaux* has made the same observation, and applied it to the Liturgy of the Church of *England*. So we may venture to assert, that this circumstance is a sufficient reason for proposing a review of our public forms of devotion.

Another reason for proposing alterations is, that a Liturgy perfectly scriptural may be composed of a number of petitions, disjoined and unconnected ; it may also be of a length insupportably tedious ; it may have a
number

number of repetitions, insipid and unmeaning ; all which may induce a plain, honest man, whose head is not filled with a set of idle notions about Church authority, to be guilty of the sin, never to be forgiven by Ecclesiastics, *viz.* that of desiring a few alterations.

We can likewise assign a reason for amending a liturgy, as well as altering articles of faith, that appears to be more forcible than any of the preceding : and this is, if they be so confined as to hinder men of learning and piety from subscribing or making use of them. For surely there is no one, at this time of day, who will dare openly to declare himself such a paltry
bigot,

bigot, as to maintain the necessity of excluding all persons from the ministry, be their abilities ever so great, and their virtues ever so conspicuous, that do not think precisely in the same manner with himself,

Now it appears that the Authour of the *Confessional* might have reasons to induce him to propose an alteration of some parts of our Liturgy, and a total abolition of our articles, and at the same time, for any thing that appears to the contrary, be as firm a believer of the truth of them as the Letter-writer himself. What occasion then had he to bring so invidious a charge against that excellent writer. But the main argument must at all events be *stiffled*, and at
last

last a person is found fit to carry this noble project into execution. But I must take the liberty of informing our Letter-writer, that he is intirely mistaken with regard to his own abilities. He seems indeed to be a person of pretty extensive reading in ecclesiastical history. But he will do well to consider that the talents requisite for writing lives, and dissertations upon the use of *Syriac* versions, and those necessary for answering such a book as the *Confessional*, are widely different, from each other.

But were this accusation of prevaricating really true, it would puzzle a man to find out the peculiar obligation, under which the Authour of the *Confessional* lies to resign his preferment, if

if he have any, or to lay aside his office as a Clergyman of the Church of *England*,

It is pretty generally known, that the articles of our Church are Calvinistical: Neither can it be denied, that the major part of the clergy are so far from being Calvinists, that very few of them can bear to hear the principles of that great reformer, defended with any tolerable degree of patience. Do not they all then labour under the same heavy charge, which the Letter-writer would willingly throw upon the Author of the *Confessional*? I believe there are but few persons, who are not very well satisfied of the insincerity of Arminian subscription. But since this

writer

writer has thought proper in his second Letter, not only to deny the charge, but is even so hardy as to assert that the articles of our Church were intended to exclude the calvinists, I find myself under the necessity of proving the contrary. Hard case indeed! to be obliged to have recourse to any arguments in support of a matter so plain, as never before to have been made the subject of dispute. But there is nothing so false or ridiculous that men will not maintain, when they undertake to defend a cause that cannot be supported, but upon principles that are subversive of the very foundations of virtue. Great pity it is that he did not live in the days of *Laud*. Certainly he could not have failed of receiving his reward.

E

And

And he would have saved the armini-
ans a great deal of needless pains that
were taken by them, in order to prove
our articles to be articles of peace and
not of faith.

The Letter-writer then, in his second
letter, admits that the doctrine of Pre-
destination is maintained in the articles
of the Church of *England*. But, it
seems, he denies that absolute predesti-
nation is any part of her belief. Now
any predestination that is not absolute
is no predestination at all. But let us
see what the articles have to say for
themselves. The XVIIth article defines
Predestination in this manner: "*Pre-*
destination is the everlasting purpose
of God (whereby before the foundations
of

"of the world were laid) be hath con-
 "stantly decreed by his counsel, secret
 "to us, to deliver from curse and dam-
 "nation those whom he has chosen in
 "Christ out of mankind, and to bring
 "them by Christ to everlasting salvation,
 "as vessels made to honour." And then
 the article goes on to inform us of the
 vocation and sanctification of the elect.
 But we are informed by the Letter-
 writer, that ~~the~~ the predestination be
 expressed first in the article, yet it does
 not determine whether the foreknowledge
 of faith and obedience be prior to the
 decree or subsequent to it. This reason-
 ing may to some appear plausible at
 first sight. But it happens a little un-
 fortunately, that the article affirms the
 decree to be everlasting; and that any

thing can be prior to an everlasting
 decree, is to me a kind of paradox.
 But let us suppose what our Letter-
 writer is willing to take for granted,
viz. that the decree is to be considered as
a consequence of the fore knowledge of our
faith and obedience; I am afraid, even
 this concession will be of very little
 service to him. For to set aside the
 belief of an arbitrary choice of the elect,
 we must suppose with the Arminians
 that faith and obedience are in some
 degree, at least, in our own power. And
 this seems to be the opinion of the
 Letter-writer. But the Xth article
 affirms, that *we have no free will to do*
good, or even to turn to faith and calling
upon God, And the XIIIth affirms, that
all works done, while we are in an un-
regenerate

*regenerate state, are so far from being
 pleasing to God, that they have the na-
 ture of sin, and do not even make men
 meet to receive grace, or deserve the
 grace of congruity. From all this, it
 plainly appears, that our regeneration
 is entirely arbitrary, and not to be re-
 duced to the narrow rules of human
 morality. For since it is declared in the
 XVIIth article, that some are chosen,
 and others in a state of desperation ;
 and since the other articles of which
 we have taken notice, declare that
 we can do nothing towards the obtain-
 ing of those graces, which are the
 cause of our salvation ; It is manifest,
 that whether the decree were made
 upon account of the graces, with which
 the regenerate are endowed, or whether
 they*

they are endowed with such graces and virtues by reason of the decree, the salvation of some, and the damnation of others, depend merely upon the good pleasure of the same Being, and are not, at least in our own power; and consequently are, properly speaking, absolute and unconditioned. Only it is rather more philosophical to suppose, that an intelligent Being would adorn and beautify a piece of work because he had chosen it, than to believe, that he made choice of it because he intended to adorn it. But it is easy to perceive that the Letter-writer is entirely unacquainted with the dispute; for he tells us, *if any one argue, that if he be elected, live as he will, he shall be saved; and if he be reprobated, notwithstanding any good works, he shall be certainly damned, this is a fatalism*

a fatalism condemned in the article. Now I must take the liberty of informing him, that this reasoning is neither more nor less than downright nonsense : And I am convinced that if a boy of fourteen years of age, in any of the *Scotch Universities*, where this subject is often debated, were to make use of such an argument, he would be hissed out of the public schools. For how, in the name of common sense, can a believer in Predestination, as set forth in the articles, argue that if, he be reprobated, he shall be certainly damned, notwithstanding any good works he may perform, when he believes, and is taught by our Church, that it is impossible for him to do any good works, unless it be by the spirit of God, which is
given

given only to the elect? Or, how can he reason with himself, that if he be predestinated, live as he will, he shall be saved, when the 17th article expressly affirms, that if he be predestinated, *he consequently walks religiously in good works.* But it is impossible to reason with a man so very ignorant of the nature of the controversy.

As to the argument he brings out of the *Institutes of a Christian man*, to shew that the reformers held Free will; he might with equal propriety have had recourse to the *Talmud*. For that book contains directions about praying for the souls of the dead, the seven sacraments, and many other curious matters of the like nature. But are any of these

these articles part of the doctrine of the Church of *England*? If they be not, with what propriety does our Letter-writer refer us to such a book for an account of the opinions of the compilers of our articles? It is very well known from the publication of that work, to the final establishment of our Church under Queen *Elizabeth*, the sentiments of the reformers underwent many variations. Nor have we any standard to judge of them, so proper as our articles and Liturgy.

The same objection may be made to the authority of the *Reformatio Legum Ecclesiasticarum*, and likewise this additional one, that it was compiled only by a few private persons, and never received the sanction of public authority.

rity. But the producing of the passage
 he cites from that work, to shew that
 the XVIIth article is inconsistent with
 the doctrine of absolute predestination,
 only serves to convince me of what I
 observed before ; that the Letter-
 writer knows nothing about the nature
 of the controversy ; for there is no
 fatalist that would refuse his assent to
 it. But it would really be mispend-
 ing one's time, to dispute with a man
 who pretends to call in question a
 matter so clear, and confirmed by all
 the writers, that lived at the time when
 the articles were established, and for
 many years afterwards. But what has
 been already urged upon this subject
 is sufficient to shew, that predestina-
 tion absolute and unconditioned is the
 doctrine

doctrine set forth by our Church. And therefore the Letter-writer being a professed Arminian must be guilty of prevarication in subscribing the articles, which declare that man has no free will nor can do any thing towards bringing about his conversion, *or that can make him meet to receive grace for his conversion*, which must depend solely upon the good pleasure of that God, who doth what he sees fit, uncontrouled by the narrow laws of human reason, both in the armies of Heaven and among the inhabitants of the Earth.

There are also many other sentiments both in the Articles and Liturgy of our Church, which differ very much

from the received opinions that are entertained by the far greater part of the clergy. So that if the Letter-writer's *silencing* scheme were to take place, I fear that not only the Authour of the *Confessional*, but almost every clergyman in the Church, would be obliged to seek out for some other employment: And among the rest the Letter-writer himself. We may therefore venture to assert, that if there be any thing in the *Confessional* contrary to our articles or Liturgy, the obligation of laying aside the profession of a clergyman affects the Authour of that work, no more than it does many, who at this very day hold some of the greatest pieces of preferment in the kingdom.

I know

I know the common cant is, that no one has a right to be maintained by a Church, unless he pay an implicit obedience to the governors of that Church. But, this reasoning when it comes to be applied to the case before us, is absolutely false ; and for this plain reason, because no clergyman of the Church of *England* is maintained by the Church, but by the state. The great *Selden* has clearly proved the absurdity of imagining tithes to depend upon a divine right. And the frequent alteration of tithes and Church lands, shew what sentiments have ever been entertained by the Legislature about this affair. It is then apparent, that the only title which Churchmen have to the profits of their benefices, is
 derived

derived from no other source, nor built upon any other foundation than the laws of the land. And every Clergyman has a right to the temporalities of his parish, till such times as his temporal superiors think proper to deprive him of them. But it is well known how little they are inclined to support the cause of persecution. When the bill for imposing subscription was first proposed, it was intirely rejected : Afterwards, upon the repeated clamour of the Clergy it passed the two houses of Parliament and received the Royal assent. And the same means that were used for extorting it originally, have ever since been applied to preserve the continuance of it. But were the subscription required in no other terms,

but

but those expressed in the act, which was made for the imposing of it, the cause of slavery would receive very little benefit from this law. From hence we may learn somewhat concerning the intentions of the Legislature in regard to this affair. It is the general practice of Parliament, when a law is entirely perverted, or universally misunderstood, to explain and enforce it by some subsequent act. Now this being the case, had the Legislature ever intended to lay any restraint upon the rights of private judgment, it is hardly to be supposed, that they would permit the popish doctrine of the freedom of the will, and the shocking consequences that flow from it, to be preached and publicly defended, and
that

that by the governours and guardians of our Church, with impunity. The Arian scheme, dangerous as it is, tends only to destroy a particular article of revelation; but Arminianism has a tendency far more pernicious, to shake the very foundations of religion, and introduce atheism itself.

Far be it from me to charge every Arminian with the consequences of his principles. I have only brought this argument to shew the intention of the Legislature, which however it condescended (undoubtedly for sufficient reasons) to put an end to the clamour of a set of bigotted priests, yet never designed to do any thing to the prejudice of Christian liberty. Were it then only from a principle of gratitude to our
temporal

temporal superiors, it behoves the Authour of the *Confessional*, and every friend of religious liberty to retain the preferment that he enjoys by their bounty ; to go on in defending the great cause, in which he hath embarked, and to lay open to the world the destructive schemes of a few mercenary and worldly Churchmen. I shall, therefore, take the liberty of addressing the Authour of that excellent performance, in the words made use of by *Cicero* upon a similar occasion. *Perge igitur, ut agis, nomenque tuum commenda immortalitati : atque hæc omnia quæ habent speciem gloriæ, collecta inanissimis splendoris insinibus, contemne ; brevia, fugacia, caduca existima : Verum decus in vertute positum est,*

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quæ

*quæ maxime illustratur magnis in rem-
publicam meritis.*

Upon the whole, I think the reader will clearly see, that the Letter-writer has not produced any thing in support of his charge; that the Authour of the *Confessional* has, by the publication of that work, any way violated his subscription; and till that is done, we may conclude this accusation to be false, ill grounded, and designed to blind the eyes of the public. And in the next place, were that really the case, yet he is under no obligation to divest himself of the character of a Minister of our Church; or at *least*, he is not under a stronger obligation to act in this manner,

manner, than the greater part of the Clergy now officiating therein.

The next thing in this letter, that occurs worthy of our consideration, is what the writer has to say about *starving Inquisitions*, the very existence of which he seems to call in question. But his observations upon this subject breath the same spirit with the rest of his performance. He tells us, that such as disapprove of the Articles of our Church, have early warning, for the most part, to chuse some other way of life. But, I would ask every one not quite void of common sense, whether a young man of the age of four and twenty be sufficiently qualified to judge of the truth or falshood of so

many metaphysical, abstruse points, as are proposed in the thirty-nine Articles. And even if he were qualified, and, in consequence of the judgment he formed, thought proper to withhold his assent from some of them, to what way of life could he betake himself, after spending the time of his youth, and sinking, perhaps, his whole fortune in qualifying himself for the ministry? Indeed, *St. Paul* informs us, that *they who preach the Gospel, ought to live by the Gospel*. But the Letter-writer seems to be of opinion, that to be entitled to such a maintenance, a man is obliged, not only to preach the Gospel, but to understand all the most difficult questions that have ever been agitated in religion or morality. But,
suppose

suppose we were to admit, that a person, when he takes orders, has no doubt concerning the truth of any of the Articles, in what studies is he to employ himself afterwards? Ought he to shut up his Bible, and not peruse it any more? But if he continue in the prosecution of his studies, and in a course of time should happen to find, that the Compilers of our Articles were fallible men, and mistaken in some of their explications of the scripture, what is he to do in consequence of this discovery? Should he betake himself to work upon the high ways? But what if he be advanced in years, and obliged to provide not only for himself, but a numerous family? In this case, let there be a man in possession of ample preferment,

preferment, a considerable living, a prebend in a Cathedral Church; let him also have before him, all the rewards that are usually given to mercenary hirelings, to engage them in the defence of slavery and oppression; I would ask him, whether after such a representation, he can still continue to plead so wretched a cause, unmoved by the dictates of conscience or humanity?

We are acquainted, that persons disaffected to the Church of *England*, as it now stands, may not get preferment so easily as others: That is in plain terms, the good things of the Church are not to be given to any, that call in question Church authority. But as far as the Clergy are concerned in the disposal
of

of preferment, (many of whom apply the name of Church to their own body, in opposition to the Catholic definition that is given of this term in the Articles) he might have spared himself the pains of informing the world, of a circumstance with which they were very well acquainted before. The Clergy in every age, from the time Christianity became an established religion, have given all the opposition in their power to the defenders of the common rights of mankind. And where the state does not permit them to hang and burn, they are contented with the milder punishment of starving such, as presume to dispute their sovereign authority. Nor have we any reason, especially if we reflect upon some
late

late proceedings, to imagine they are become less tenacious of their accustomed privileges. But, happily for the friends of liberty, great part of the ecclesiastical preferments in this kingdom is in the hands of laymen, who are not so immediately interested in militating against the truth of the Gospel.

The Letter-writer seems to take it amiss, that the Authour of the *Confessional* should wish to relieve the scruples of conscientious Dissenters. But this is an error, into which I believe he is not very likely to fall. What he urges upon this subject is short, but sufficient to convince the world, that he would not give his vote in favour of any concessions, be they ever so reasonable.

He

He says the Dissenters would not now acquiesce in such, as they seemed formerly to demand ; and that many of the alterations required by them at present, are such, as we cannot make without sin ; and if they were made, more of our own people would leave us, than we should gain from them. But I should be glad to be informed where the sin would be, were we to render our Public forms more general, and to reduce them to a greater degree of simplicity ? Can any one be so stupid as to imagine, that *O God the Father of Heaven*, is a petition, that carries with it the idea of sin, were it to be separated from the subsequent one, of, *O holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity*. If simplicity of worship be
H a sin,

a sin, I know of no greater sinner than our *Saviour*, and the primitive Christians. Let him prove, that they admitted any of these metaphysical subtilties into their offices, and then he will have some reason for asserting, that no alteration can take place in our forms without sin. With regard to the other part of his assertion, *viz.* that we should by such alterations lose more from our communion, than would be gained from the Dissenters, it is so notorious a falshood, as scarcely to deserve a serious refutation. Does the open contempt which is shewn at the repeating many parts of the service, and particularly the Athanasian creed, shew any aversion in the Laity to listen to a reformation. But it has always
been

been the custom of slaves to Church authority, to represent the Laity as a parcel of obstinate fools. Whereas daily experience shews us, that they desire nothing more than to see the Church reformed, and the Clergy obliged to live agreeably to their professions as ministers of the Gospel.

The Authour of the *Confessional* is of opinion, that some regard should be shewn to the necessities of our own people ; and that in the room of the present, some more animated and intelligible forms of devotion ought to be substituted. And where would be the harm, if this proposal were to take place? But this Writer seems to think, that it would be impossible to make a form more animated, or more intelligible,

unless we were to exclude the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel. As to the first part of this assertion, I can only answer, that this is merely a matter of taste ; and if a man will contend, that the poetry of *Sternhold* and *Hopkins* be superior to that of *Dryden* or *Milton*, I can do nothing more, than pity his want of judgment. But with regard to the other part, that it is impossible to make a more intelligible form, unless we were to exclude the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel, it must be answered by another question: *viz.* Whether the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel consist in metaphysical jargon, and cursing and damning all who differ from us? And if this be the case, we desire to know, where the
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peculiar doctrines of the Gospel were in the three first centuries? A man of a truly benevolent and catholic spirit, can imagine to himself a form, wherein all rational Christians can join in offering up their petitions to God, without expressing their own peculiar sentiments, which ought never to be made the subject of public worship. But evident as this truth is, I do not wonder that a narrow minded Bigot, who has always been accustomed to view things of this nature through the medium of established confessions, should not readily perceive the force of it. But to enable him to be more upon his guard, whenever he be disposed to offer his crudities to the world again, I will set before him a matter of fact, that
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may serve to convince him of the absurdity of opinions taken up at random. And that is, there are several congregations in this kingdom, among the protestant Dissenters, that make use of a Liturgy composed upon such catholic principles, that I believe bigotry itself would not scruple to join in it. The several members of these congregations are what the world calls Arians, Socinians, Arminians, and twenty more different sects, who all unite in offering up their prayers to Almighty God, according to the common principles of Christianity, and live in the greatest peace and harmony with each other.

Indeed the possibility of introducing such a Liturgy among them was very
much

much disputed. At length by the resolution of a few worthy ministers, it is introduced into several places. Neither has the introduction of it produced any inconveniences, as far as I have been able to learn, except a little opposition from the quarter from whence all attempts to reform, are sure to meet with discouragement in every denomination; I mean from a few inconsiderable bigots of their own preachers.*

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I must here except the late learned Doctor *Taylor*, who was the only man of any consequence, that publicly opposed the introduction of a Liturgy among the Dissenters. But when it is remembered, that the treatise he composed upon that subject, was written by him in his last illness, and published after his death, it must have less weight with intelligent readers, than the work of so able a writer would otherwise have.

The Letter-writer tells us, that there are mysteries in natural, as well as revealed Religion. But surely the very existence of mysteries is a sufficient reason against our attempting to explain them. And whatever mysteries are revealed in the Gospel, it becomes us to receive in the language of scripture, and not to put our own fanciful expositions upon them. As to the mysteries of natural Religion, to me it appears all a mystery ; for I know of no natural Religion, nor of any real Religion, but what is contained in the Gospel. And I believe any one, that is conversant in the works of *Marper-tuis*, *Buffon*, *Robinet*, and some late writers, will be inclined to think, that most of the boasted demonstrations

tions of the moral attributes of the diety, stand upon a very sandy foundation. And this circumstance should be an additional motive, to induce the ministers of the Gospel, to remove every obstacle to its being propogated throughout the world.

In the next place, he proceeds to discover some resentment against the Authour of the *Confessional*, for affirming that the backwardness of Churchmen in receiving propofals of alterations, will appear to thinking men something like a combination, to adhere to the establiſhed ſystem, for ſome political purpoſes not fit to be owned. But I can aſſure him, that worthy writer is not ſingular in his judgment,

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for all the world is of the same opinion. For, whence can it proceed, unless it be from infidelity disguised under the cloak of Religion, that notwithstanding many of our Articles and forms have long been given up as indefensible, yet no public attempt has been made, to convince the world, that the Clergy are sincere in their desires, to reduce them to their primitive plainness and simplicity. A certain nobleman that lived at the west end of the town, as remarkable for the brilliancy of his wit, as the soundness of his judgment, was of opinion, that a man might perform all the functions of a parish Priest, with the most exact punctuality ; and at the same time not believe a syllable of Christianity. God grant, that this may
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not be the case with many of our time serving divines.

But we are informed, that the Government might not chuse to enter upon a plan of reforming. But before we draw this conclusion, let the leading men among the Clergy begin with making a modest, but earnest application to Parliament, setting forth the difficulties under which they labour, and the injury the protestant Religion daily receives from Confessions of faith imposed by human authority, and let them petition to be relieved from them. And should their request be refused (which is not very probable) let them unite in openly protesting against extending the subscription to

any Articles, but those that concern the true Confession of the Christian Faith, and the due Administration of the Sacraments.

When they have so done, the world will be inclined to believe that they are in earnest in their endeavours to promote Religion. But if we take an attentive view of the state of the times, we shall find no reason to suppose, that the Great Council of the Nation would reject any attempts to reform the Church, especially if such proposals were seconded by any number of the Clergy. Perhaps the only reason, that has prevented our Representatives from taking this matter in hand before, is an unjust apprehension of the power
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of the Clergy, and their influence over the minds of the Laity : And being very well convinced, how much averse that order is to all reformations, they have been afraid of the clamour that would be raised by them, were such a thing to be attempted. But this is a mistake which cannot last for ever. We do not live in the days of *Sacheverel* : Nor would the stale trick of raising a cry that the Church is in danger, be now of the least service. But should the Laity once begin a reformation of their own accord, they will reform, I believe, to some purpose. A disposition of this sort is beginning to shew itself in *Ireland*. The non-residence of the Clergy has been publicly animadverted upon in the House of Commons

mons of that Kingdom. And it would be paying no great compliment to the members of a British Parliament to suppose, that they will suffer themselves to be outdone in endeavours to serve the public by the Parliament of another Nation.

But perhaps, when the Letter-writer is talking about our temporal Governours, he means the prime Minister of state. If that be the case, I shall be ready to admit, that it is an affair, which will greatly depend upon the character of the man, who is in that high station. There is no doubt, but that there are in the world, Atheistical ministers of state as well as Atheistical Prelates : Men that have no regard
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for Religion, their Country, or any thing truly valuable, but merely as far as it is consistent with their own private interest. To such persons, the character, *Vendidit hic auro patriam, dominumque potentem imposuit*, may be justly applied. But what is this to the purpose? I believe there is no prime Minister, so blind to his own interest, as to oppose the whole body of the Clergy, seconded by a considerable number of the Laity, however they might endeavour to repress the first attempt. Even *Richelieu* (Atheist as he was) would not, I imagine, have continued to persecute the *French* Protestants, had he not thought it to have been agreeable to the popish Clergy.

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The Letter-writer, it seems, is very much displeased, that the Clergy should be blamed for not attempting to make alterations ; *especially when their lives are spent in teaching and practising the Protestant doctrines.* Surely, if an honest Mahometan was to meet with this passage, and at the same time to take a view of the lives of many of the Clergy, he would entertain an odd opinion of the nature of the Protestant doctrines. If the Protestant doctrines consist in attending upon Noblemens livies, in frequenting all the carding Assemblies within reach, in being immersed in a continued scence of folly and dissipation, and in being often engaged in the base, and infamous scheme, of ruining the liberties of their country, by becoming
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Agents at our Elections : It must then be confessed that the lives of many of them are uniformly spent in the practice of the Protestant doctrines. And it is no way wonderful that such kind of men should prefer darkness to light. But no one can assign a reason, why those persons, whose lives are conformable to the Gospel, should have any objection to a free examination of any Articles of faith : For the love of liberty, and the love of virtue are inseparable from each other.

But we are asked ; what liberty we mean ? And the Authour of the *Confessional* is very politely told, that *Newgate* might furnish such solicitors in the cause of freedom. Now, really,

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I have not the honour of being acquainted with any of the *Newgate* solicitors : Neither do I care for what liberty they would plead. If the Letter-writer keeps better company than myself, the greater is my misfortune. But from all that I can learn, the Author of the *Confessional* only desires, that a proper distinction be made between the two Governments, *temporal* and *spiritual*. And I dare say, he will at all times shew himself ready to render to *Cæsar* the things that are *Cæsar's*, as well as he is, to render to God the things that are God's. And this is the liberty that we claim : A liberty, no greater than that, which was left us by the founder of our faith ;
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and in which we are by the Apostle exhorted to stand free. And whether this liberty be not a necessary consequence of the principles of the reformation, is the subject of the present dispute.

As I professed at the beginning of these Remarks, to have nothing to do with any of the charges of misquotation, brought by the Letter-writer against the Authour of the *Confessional*, and since all his general arguments have been particularly considered, I might now put an end to the dispute between us : For the remaining part of his letter relates to matters which do not any way concern the public. However, he has made one or two ob-

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servations

servations more, that are too extraordinary to be passed over in silence.

In the course of that admirable performance, the Authour of the *Confessional* has made some reflections upon *Ward's* treatment of Doctor *Whitby*. It seems in a book published by the Doctor, entitled, *The Protestant Reconciler*, he had defended certain propositions, which, one would have thought, were very innocent in themselves, and perfectly agreeable with the genius and spirit of the Gospel. But they happened to be written at a time, when the good Bishops, had they been heartily assisted by the state, would have hanged and burned every Dissenter in the kingdom. *Ward* upon this, in a very arbitrary manner obliged

obliged *Whitby*, to sign a recantation of the doctrines contained in these propositions. The observation which the Letter-writer makes upon this affair, is, that if the rest of them were like those two, which are produced by the Authour of the *Confessional*, the Doctor had no great hardship done him. For, says he, *they are so incautiously expressed, that one of them is in terms, and the other by consequence, inconsistent with making an act of Parliament, or a by-law of a corporation, about any common matter.* Of all the foolish defences of oppression that were ever offered to the public, this is the most ridiculous. Suppose the Doctor's arguments had extended somewhat farther, and had even tended to shew the unlawfulness of

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of the very existence both of Parliaments and Corporations, or any thing else equally erroneous. The law was open : The Civil magistrate might have taken notice of it. But what have Bishops to do with such matters? Indeed *Bonner* often used to amuse himself with torturing Hereticks. But I was never of opinion, that it was a proper employment for a Protestant Bishop, to become both Judge and Executioner of the law.

But the reader will observe, that a mystery is contained under this sage observation, and, foreign as it may seem to the purpose, it is not entirely without a meaning. Whoever has heard of a cruel and infamous piece of Ecclesiastical

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cal oppression, that was exercised in a familiar case, even in these days of free inquiry, will not be altogether ignorant of the Letter-writer's intentions.

In the 66th page of this Letter, we are informed, *that Clergymen are so far from being fond of a sacramental test, that they would be very glad of any other effectual security in its place.* Very condescending truly! But a *Test*, it seems, they must have, of some kind or other. But I should be glad to know, what *they* have to do in the affair; Suppose the *Parliament* thought Religion equally, or more secure without a test, what would be the consequence? Would it give the Clergy a right to blow the trumpet of sedition,
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and raise a clamour that the Church was in danger ? But let us grant that a Test be ever so necessary; for a Clergyman to appear in the support of such a measure, argues more of the sanguinary spirit of an Inquisitor, than of the benevolent temper of a Minister of Jesus Christ.

To convince both the Letter-writer, and the World, that I have no other attachment to the Authour of the *Confessional*, than as far as he shews himself a defender of the principles of liberty ; I shall take this opportunity of declaring an opinion, wherein I materially differ from him. And that relates to the toleration of the Papists. For notwithstanding all their
superstition,

superstition, I would give my consent to ~~the~~ repealing of every law now in force against them. And as a citizen of the world, I heartily wish, that they may feel the blessed consequences of removing every impediment to the progress of true Christianity. But I cannot help thinking, the Letter-writer lies under a very great mistake in imagining, that we can form any judgment of the number of Papists, from the late accounts that have been taken of them. A variety of circumstances contribute to render such an account, especially in the City of *London* very uncertain. In many places, the masters of families refused to give any account of the Religion of their lodgers. In other parts,

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the accounts they gave were very imperfect and unsatisfactory ; and in some they were totally unacquainted whether any Religion were professed by their domestics. There is also reason to believe, that many of the Clergy might consider the whole affair as a state trick, and so give themselves no great concern about it. But after all, the way to ruin the cause of Popery, is neither numbering the Papists, nor putting the penal laws in force against them. But if we really wish well to the Protestant Religion, we ought to take such measures, as are necessary, to give mankind a just notion of the nature of the Gospel dispensation : Which, were it rightly understood, seems calculated to put an end to every species of Clerical tyranny ;
and

and to introduce in its room universal peace and charity.

In answer to the charge, brought by the Authour of the *Confessional*, wherein it is asserted, that the zeal, both of pastor and people, in the Church of *England* is visibly declined, our Letter-writer has the following curious observation, *And so is their zeal against Infidelity, against Quakerism, against vice.* Now really, I know not which to admire most, the profound ignorance, or the senseless bigotry that appears in this Remark. A reader who was not sensible of the meaning of the words, *Infidelity*, *Quakerism*, and *Vice*, would certainly be inclined to believe from the light in which they are represented by the

Letter-writer, that they were convertible terms ; and that Quakerism was as pernicious in its consequences, as Infidelity, Popery, and vice. And perhaps, this is the case, in his opinion. But people, who do not form their sentiments concerning a body of men from hearsays, can inform him, that a person may be a Quaker, and yet neither an Infidel in his faith, nor vicious in his practice. But can he really be so very devoid of common sense, as to imagine that Quakerism claims our attention equally with the Popery. The Quakers indeed reject two ritual ordinances of our Religion. How far one of them at least, was designed to continue in the Church of Christ, is a subject, that has afforded matter of
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argumentation among persons of great learning, who were never suspected of being Quakers. But from all that I have been able to learn, the essentials of Christianity (which I hope no man is so stupid as to place, either in water-baptism, or in eating bread and drinking wine) are as much maintained among that sect of Christians as in Churches, that can shew more of the splendour, magnificence, and opulence of the world. But the great misfortune is, the Quakers reject an hireling ministry : *Hinc illæ Lacrymæ*. For were that scheme once to take place, the trade would be at an end, and the defenders of subscription must neither look for Livings, nor Prebends, as the reward of their labours. As to the errors of Quakerism, it becomes

becomes the Ministers of Jesus to oppose them as well as every thing else that is contrary to the truth of the Gospel: But if any one pretend to maintain that the errors of that sect have a tendency as pernicious as Popish Idolatry, or even the unchristian impositions of worldly Church-men, I would advise him to go and learn, what that meaneth, *I will have mercy and not sacrifice.*

Among many other paradoxes that are maintainted by our Letter-writer, this is one; viz. *that if subscriptions were laid aside, not only persons void of zeal against Protestantism, but full of zeal against it, might then come into our Church preferments, and preach up Popery with the utmost freedom.* We
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are now like to be in a fine situation ; and notwithstanding all the zeal he shews against Popery, who knows but the Authour of the *Confessional* may be a Jesuit in disguise ? And indeed, were the scheme of abolishing the practice of subscription to take place, I know of no objection that can be made to this reasoning, except a trifling one, drawn from the leading and fundamental Article of Popery. And great pity it is, that by one argument all this curious train of reasoning should be entirely overthrown. Were not I obliged to produce it, from motives of a superior nature, *viz.* to prevent the Letter-writer's imposing upon a careless reader, (for I am sensible, such reasoning cannot prejudice the minds of those who take any

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pains to think for themselves) I should be inclined to suppress it; from a principle of tenderness to him, as a Divine, a Scholar, and a man of Common-Sense. But I dare say, the intelligent reader is already sensible of the trifling sophistry displayed in this argument : Nor have I any need to acquaint him, that a Papist consistently with the principles of Popery, can no more subscribe to the scriptures as a full, absolute, compleat and perfect rule of faith, independant of all others, than he can to a declaration against transubstantiation. And, if he were inclined to prevaricate, he might as well come into Church preferment, as matters now stand, as he could, were the proposal of the Author of the *Confessional* to take effect;

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for in either case he must solemnly and formally renounce Popery and declare himself a Protestant. But I cannot sufficiently admire and commend the Letter-writer's zeal against Popery, nor can I charge it with any thing more, than being a zeal without knowledge.

I have now finished my Remarks upon the first Letter to the Authour of the *Confessional*; and I cannot help thinking, it has been sufficiently shewn, that the Letter-writer is not in every part invulnerable. And tho' covered with the mighty shield of
 ***** power, yet he is not

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otally secured from the attacks of the friends of liberty.*

These remarks to the public may convince the world, that notwithstanding any melancholy appearances, there are some, even among the Clergy, who, superior to all mercenary considerations, employ their time and talents in the defence of truth and liberty. Nor are the seeds of those generous sentiments that were sown by a *Cudworth*, and a *Whichcot*, reared and cultivated by a *Burnett* and a *Tillotson*, and brought

* See a late excellent Pamphlet intituled, *Occasional Remarks upon some Strictures on the Confessional*, particularly in a Pamphlet intituled, *Doubts concerning the Authenticity of the last Publication of the Confessional*, Printed for Bladon, Pater-noster-Row.

brought to maturity by a *Clarke* and an *Hoadly* entirely lost. And tho' the iniquitous method of endeavouring to stifle truth may prevail for a season, yet finally it will rise victorious : And all these attempts will only contribute to confirm and establish it.

Duris ut Ilex tonsa bipennibus
 Nigræ feraci frondis in Algido,
 Per damna, per cædes ab ipso
 Ducit opes, animumque ferro. HOR.

But after all that has been said, it were to be wished, that the public would keep their attention fixed upon the main argument, and consider, how far the enjoining subscription to Articles of faith be agreeable to

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scripture,

scripture, and consistent with the fundamental principles of Protestantism.

Some perhaps there are, who because liberty of conscience is not directly attacked, may not be inclined to give themselves any concern about a farther reformation. But if they will only reflect upon the measures pursued by ambitious Church-men in past ages, they will be ready to lay hold of every opportunity to prevent the like mischiefs for the future. And no way can succeed so well, as that proposed by the Authour of the *Confessional*. For the Gospel is an utter enemy to all attempts of this kind, and gives no encouragement to the Clergy, to invade the rights and liberties of the Laity, who are as capable

ble judges of all controverted points in Religion, as any of the sacred order. And had the Gospel been always preached freely, and without restraint, we had never heard of any of those extravagant claims that have made their appearance in the world.

Under the mild Government of our present Primate, we have no reason to fear an undue exertion of Church authority. But, if, at some distant period of time (and in the revolution of ages, who can tell what may happen) another *Laud** should get possession

* The Letter-writer's endeavouring to varnish over the character of *Laud* and some others, must incline one to imagine, that he proceeds upon the same plan with the Authour of the *Dictionnaire Philosophique*. That writer in the article wherein
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sion of the primacy, what have not the friends of liberty to fear ? This is not only possible, but also a Character might be drawn, which supported by a proper share of temporal power, would be more terrible than that of *Laud* himself. Let us imagine, for example, one *directly opposite* to the character of our present Archbishop. If, I say, a man in the

he treats of virtue, takes no small pains to reduce all virtuous actions to beneficence ; and so endeavours to prove that *Hero*, *Pope Alexander* the Sixth, and some other monsters, were virtuous men. Upon this principle, we may rank *Laud* in the same class. And because he performed some generous actions, we ought, I suppose, to pass over his treatment of *Lesghton*, and many other cruelties of the like nature. The only objection that can be made to this reasoning, is, that such a definition of virtue, bids fair to destroy all obligation, both moral, civil, and religious.

the early part of his life should be educated in the principles of liberty : If by a course of free inquiry improperly conducted, he should be led to doubt of the truth, I will not say of revealed, but even natural Religion itself : If he should be so well satisfied with his new scheme, as to exert himself in making profelytes to it : If upon the prospect of some temporal advantages, he should be so miraculously converted to the belief of Christianity, as to enter into holy orders, and set up for a zealous defender of that Gospel he had before ridiculed and despised : If the same person, by a dextrous accommodation to the times should at length raise himself to the primacy of this kingdom :

dom: If after his exaltation, he should begin to shew his orthodoxy, by polluting himself with the persecution of a poor defenceless Infidel: If he should make use of the lowest arts to prevent the propagation of truth; in short, if his whole conduct be such as will give the world reason to believe, that he considers Religion in no other light than a political engine; if such a man should arise, and any of us live to behold the See of *Canterbury* so unworthily filled; and our temporal superiors think proper to afford him any encouragement; I dare venture to affirm, indifferent as we now are to the cause of Christian liberty, we should then be justly alarmed for our civil liberties, as well as the safety of the Protestant Religion.



A P P E N D I X.

THE following defence of the Authour of the *Confessional* respecting his observations on the conduct of *Dr. Wake*, when Archbishop of *Canterbury*, and on a passage from *Dr. Mosheim*, is extracted from a late periodical production, entitled, *The Record of Literature*, in the second and third Volumes of which is given an entire view of the controversy. As it is supposed to have been unobserved by the Letter-writer, as well as by a writer in the *Monthly Review*,* it is here republished

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* “ It is but justice, says he, (in his review of the first of the three Letters to the Authour of the *Confessional*) to acknowledge, that he has pointed out some few mistakes and misrepresentations which the Authour of the *Confessional* is chargeable with, for want of attention or proper information, and which we doubt not but he will have candor enough to acknowledge; particularly what is said in regard to Archbishop *Wake*, appears to us to merit his

lished for the satisfaction of both, and in justice to the Authour of the *Confessional*, at the Request of my Correspondent.

To

his attention, and likewise what is said in regard to a passage from Dr. *Mosheim*." Monthly Review for February 1768, page 135.

Such is the remark of the Reviewer of the above mentioned *Letter*; which remark, it is probable would not have been made, if, besides his being unacquainted with the defence of the Authour of the *Confessional* on these points by *Cantabrigienfis*, he had not also overlooked the two additional notes to the Preface to the first Edition of the *Confessional*, at p. 74—84 and 85—87 — Vide *Confessional*, 2d. Ed.

The Authour of an *Apology for the Catholics of Great Britain and Ireland*, says, that Archbishop *Wake* had entertained a design of this sort [of uniting the Church of *England* with a *Catholic* Church] The Reviewer of that Article expresseth his hope, that this is said of the Archbishop without any foundation: And adds, "But sure he (the Apologiſt) can have no expectations, that the present Archbishop, that steady and invariable friend to liberty, civil and religious, will engage in such a project." Monthly Review for April 1768, p. 274.

I will not suffer myself to doubt of the good reason the Reviewer hath for his confidence in the present Archbishop's disinclination to such a project, but it is amazing, that he should suppose that Archbishop *Wake* is taxed with being concerned therein, without any foundation, as the fact is confessed both by the friends and enemies of our Church Establishment.

To the COMPILERS of the MONTHLY RECORD of
LITERATURE.

GENTLEMEN,

A WRITER in the *London Magazine* for *March*, hath fallen upon the Authour of the CONFESSIO^NAL with two very foul accusations, expressed in no less foul language; and as it is hardly to be expected, that justice would be done to the said Authour by admitting his defence into a pamphlet, which hath prejudged his cause by titling his adversary's letter, *The Confessionalist detected*, it is requested that you will give an advocate for the Authour of the CONFESSIO^NAL an equitable hearing in your very respectable publication, with regard to the points in question.

The first crime laid to our Authour's charge is, that, "occasion is taken from the ambiguous expression *ecclesia Gallicana*, to make MOSHEIM say*, that Archbishop WAKE projected an union between the Church of *England* and the French *popish* Church: Whereas, MOSHEIM manifestly meant the French *protestant* Churches." Now, if this angry gentleman will but give himself the trouble to read WAKE's article, in the *Biographia*

* *Confessional*, pref. p. lxii.

Britannica, vol. VI. part ii. he will, to his great confusion and astonishment, make two discoveries.

1. That Dr. WAKE's concurrents and correspondents in this projected union were no others than DU PIN, PIERS DE GIRARDIN and QUINAULT, doctors in the *Sorbonne*, with the countenance of the cardinal DE NOAILLES, who were much such protestants as OBADIAH WALKER. 2. That, according to Dr. WAKE's sentiments exhibited in the extracts of his letters to father COURAYER, under the same article, it is just as likely that Dr. WAKE should project a religious union with the *Crim Tartars*, as with the protestant antiepiscopal Churches of *France*. Of all or any of this our *Detector* knew nothing. But, notwithstanding his prattle about MOSHEIM's context being inconsistent with any other meaning of the words *ecclesia Gallicana*, &c. I imagine he will persuade very few, that MOSHEIM knew as little of the matter as he did.

His other quarrel with the Authour of the CONFSSIONAL is, that " he made himself wilfully
" ignorant of a mistranslation of a passage in MOSHEIM by Mr. MACLAINE, and was glad to lay
" hold of the blunder for the sake of introducing
" his

“ his absurd calumny [the calumny above-*detected*]
 “ upon Archbishop WAKE.” The passage occurs
 CONFSSIONAL, pref. p. lviii.—Now, the Authour
 of the CONFSSIONAL, 1. expresses his suspicion that
 the translation was inaccurate, *ibid.* p. lix.—2. de-
 clares, he had not an opportunity of being informed
 how it was in the original; and, probably hath never
 had that opportunity even to this hour, unless he
 hath seen the *London Magazine* for *March*, 1767.
 3. It now appears, the Authour of the CONFESSI-
 ONAL had no calumny to serve by the catch.
 Archbishop WAKE stands convicted of the indict-
 ment in manner and form; and our Letter-writer’s
candor appears to be equal to his knowledge of the
 matter of fact. A word or two, perhaps, might be
 offered on the behalf of the translator. But it is
 better he should be left to answer for himself, and
 likewise that this learned and gentle spirited *Oxford*
 gentleman should be dismissed without any reflection
 on the *atmosphere* he breathes, but not without a
 friendly intimation to sit down to his next critical
 effort, with a better temper and more knowledge
 of his subject.

I am, Gentlemen, &c.

April 8, 1767.

CANTABRIGIENSIS.

To the AUTHOURS of the MONTHLY RECORD of
LITERATURE.

GENTLEMEN,

AFTER returning you my thanks for admitting my letter in defence of the Authour of the *Confessional* into your RECORD for *May*, I must now request your farther indulgence in permitting me to obviate by your means another mistake, or rather, indeed, misrepresentation, relating to the same Authour, which hath appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for the same month of *May*, according to their stile.

The blunder of the *Oxford* gentleman who figured in the *London Magazine* for *March* last in defence of Archbishop WAKE's transaction with the *Gallican* Church, was so notorious, that even they who are ready to applaud his zeal against the *Confessional*, are become ashamed of him; and have openly disclaimed him, as a defender of the said Archbishop, not without terms of contempt, expressed in the parody of a trite latin passage usually hackneyed on such occasions.

However, as it was a common point both with the *Oxford-man* and his *Reprover* (who, by the way, signs himself *Anglicanus* in the *St. James's Chronicle*

Chronicle of May 21.) to depreciate and vilify the Authour of the *Confessional* as much as possible, it became necessary to give the poor *Oxonian* a sugar-plumb; for though he hath so miserably missed the mark in the matter of the *Gallican* Church, he may in some other province of chicane, be an useful hand, and is therefore to be kept in humour, so far as he can be decently abetted.

Accordingly the said *Anglicanus*, having amplified his defence of Dr. WAKE in a letter dated from *Canterbury*, inserted in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for *May*. p. 241. adds the following postscript.

“ P. S. In another quotation from Dr. MOSHEIM
“ the letter writer has indeed detected a very pal-
“ pable error in Mr. MACLAINE's translation, and
“ has thereby fully obviated that part of the *Con-*
“ *fessionalists* charge which was built upon it.”

Now what is the *Charge* which the *Confessionalist* hath built upon this error? I profess I have looked through the preface both to the first and second edition of the *Confessional*, and can find no charge which at all depends upon Mr. MACLAINE's erroneous translation. Perhaps there may be dreamers at *Canterbury*, as well as at *Oxford*.

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The letter from *Canterbury* is dated *April 18, 1767*. But the second edition of the *Confessional* was not then published. We have therefore only to consider what use the Authour of the *Confessional* made of Mr. MACLAINE's error in the first edition of that work.

Mr. MACLAINE, deluded by his own oversight, sets himself to confute MOSHEIM's supposed assertion with great vehemence ; calling it an *aspiration*, and offering reasons to shew that, " the re-
" formed Churches were never at such a distance
" from the spirit and doctrine of the Church of
" *Rome*, as at this day."

This assertion of Mr. MACLAINE, or rather indeed the reasoning upon which it is supported, the Authour of the *Confessional* takes the liberty to call in question. He had never seen MOSHEIM's original (I am *now* authorised to say, he has never seen it to this hour, otherwise than in the citation in the *London Magazine* for *March*) and he had no reason to question Mr. MACLAINE's abilities, as a translator, any more than the knowledge or integrity of Dr. MOSHEIM in reporting a matter of fact.

Mr.

Mr. MACLAINE undoubtedly is, and would have been of the opinion he has expressed, and would have expressed it upon occasion given by any other Authour, whatever MOSHEIM had or had not said upon the subject. On the other hand, the Authour of the *Confessional's* remarks are addressed solely to Mr. MACLAINE's reasoning, and I doubt not but he would have made the same remarks upon the same reasoning by whomsoever it had been employed, and wheresoever he had met with it; nor do his remarks receive any support from the supposed assertion of Dr. MOSHEIM. Where then is his *charge* built upon the very palpable error in Mr. MACLAINE's translation?

But perhaps the *Canterbury* gentleman, as he does not seem to be overloaded with apprehension, might imagine that some *charge* upon Dr. WAKE is contained in the following passage. "After all, " this instance of a reformed Church growing more " placable towards *Romish* doctrines, is, on the behalf of Dr. MOSHEIM, an instance *ad hominem* " to Mr. MACLAINE, even with Mr. MACLAINE's

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" own

“ own suffrage, who will therefore, it is hoped,
“ abate of his resentment towards that excellent
“ historian, and consider his remark in a less in-
“ dious light than that of an aspersion.” *Pref. Con.*
p. lxvi.

The instance here meant, is the instance of Archbishop WAKE's treating with the *Gallican* Church for an union with the Church of *England*. But is *that* brought *here* as a *charge* upon the Archbishop built upon Mr. MACLAINE's erroneous translation of Dr. MOSHEIM. So perhaps the *Canterbury* writer might imagine. But who sees not, that the instance here mentioned is brought as *evidence*, in support of MOSHEIM's supposed *charge*, not against Dr. WAKE, but against the protestant Churches in general. Would it not be adviseable for this gentleman before his next sally into the field of controversy, to read Dr. BLACKSTONE in order to learn to distinguish between an *indictment* and the *evidence* brought to support it.

I would the rather recommend this to our *Canterbury* adventurer, as he seems totally to have
mistaken

mistaken the nature and tendency of the *evidence*, he hath retailed from the *Biographia Britannica*, in favour of Dr. WAKE. There can be no doubt but his *bonest* intention was to white-wash the Archbishop, and to clear him, if possible, from all suspicions of leaning to popery. To compass this, there were but two things to be done. 1. To prove that the Archbishop never entered into any treaty of union with the *Gallican* divines; or, 2. To prove that the Archbishop would not give up one single article of the Church of *England*, to forward the compromise. Now that a treaty there was, the *Biographer* is exprefs and positive.—He says indeed, that “the Archbishop made not the least “concession,”—but does he mean not the *least concession* with respect to any one article of the Church of *England*? By no means. He explains himself sufficiently—“*without making the least concession, towards approving the AMBITIOUS pretensions of the church of Rome.*” What the Archbishop found fault with, were the pope’s pretensions to be HEAD of the Church. His Grace, it is

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like, had no mind, that the pope should be higher in the Church of *Rome*, than he himself was in the Church of *England*. But had he the same objections to all the other doctrines of popery, particularly the doctrine of *Apostolical succession*? Ask the learned and candid father COURAYER. Might there not be *other* peculiar doctrines of popery to which the Archbishop had no objection? Let him speak for himself out of this very *Canterburian* apology. "I may and do, says he, separate from THE
"POPE and his TYRANNY, but I will not be a
"SCHISMATIC; in this disposition I live, and if in
"this disposition I die, I shall not fear any anathe-
"mas from the *Vatican* fulminated against me." And have not thousands of Roman Catholics died in this very disposition? "My principles, says his
"Grace, are catholic." Which is to be understood of his charity to the papists, whom for that reason he took to be catholic and not schismatical. But what became of his *catholicism*, when the repeal of the schism bill was in agitation? And whence came the difference he made between protestant and popish dissenters? Did that proceed
from

from his *catholic* principles? For my part I should not wonder if *Oxford* should return the ball to *Canterbury*, and tell this writer in his turn, that *WAKE* wanted no such defenders.

I am, Gentlemen,

June 9, 1767. Your obliged humble servant.

[CANTABRIGIENSIS.

F I N I S.

E R R A T A.

Page 6. Line 12. Read, Absurdities

39. L. 8. R. Practice

41. L. 17 R. insignibus

57. L. 1. R. Deity

63. L. 6. R. potentem

L. 14. R. Richlieu

64. L. 13. R. Levees.

L. 16. R. scene

76. L. 14. R, with popery

82. L. 3 dele, to the public

85. L. last, R. Philosophiques,

86. L. 13. R. Nero

87. L. 16. R. despised

